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Letter from Sarah Whitney, to Anne Whitney, Rome, Italy, 1871 January 1

Sarah Whitney

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On this 1st day of Jan^y. 1871. I can at least
wish my beloved a happy New Year - & with her
the friends that keep her company. Inspiration
for much else fails in the non arrival of the
looked for letter, & in the cable report that half
Rome has been inundated by the rise of the Tiber.
That Gr. Home & Gr. Studio may have been in the
other half is my earnest hope & trust - but where
ever they may be, the statement is one to excite
anxiety. What caused the rise & what its
consequence is, & is likely to be, the paper does
not say; & ones own speculations are not in-
spiring. The New Year finds Belmont soil
covered with snow & with air sharp enough to
retain it. - But the sleighing that succeeded
Thursdays storm is so far spoiled as to send
most of our friends back to their wheel carriages.
The Lamberts & Stones came this morn^g in sleighs
to bring their New Years greetings. Fanny goes tomorrow
to Quincy to open a private school of 6 scholars.
The visit that I was anticipating from Katy L.
when I last wrote had to be postponed - & this
week she goes to cabin the great house in Newbig.

I find much gladness in the joy that has come during the last week to two houses of our friends.

1stly Mabel Weiss is safe & well (I believe) at home. Carrie saw her mother at church this morn'g, & she said in reply to C's congratulations that she wished every body were as happy as she. 2ndly Ellen Robbins has sold her furniture for the full price - 1000 dollars.

Having despair'd of finding a purchaser, C. had about concluded to try to dispose of it by raffle.

Henry Ward Beecher came to the rescue - & one of his society is the owner through the minister's recommendation of the artistic achievement.

A newspaper says that Edmonia Lewis has gone back to Rome with an order for a statue of John Brown. That is good for Edmonia - May it be good for them who have ordered it & for the public who are to be educated by it! A card photograph of Sojourner Truth that Carrie bought yesterday at the Laffrey Bazar, of the original is beside me. The motto under it is "I sell the shadow to support the substance." She says she was a slave forty years & has been free as long - but she looks like her words. If true, she is a wonderfully preserved specimen of four-score years. The Bazar has not been as

successful pecuniarily as its projectors anticipated. They must have worked valiantly - but they committed a great error in holding it strictly after Christmas, when if ever, every body's purse is depleted. I am sorry for them, but am glad that Mrs Howe was led by the disappointment to utter good strong words of faith. She calls to mind the small days of anti-slavery labor when a few women year after year worked in the same way.

You did not tell me if you or any body else found any pleasure or profit in the reading of Robert Falconer! I fancied as I read, that you might have been repelled by its excess of religiosity & have thrown it aside. It has been much praised & many a Christmas gift I doubt not has been made of it. Mrs Hemmings gave it to Katy because her own enjoyment of it had been so great. I like parts of it very much but not the whole sufficiently to warrant the purchase of another copy. I found for Mother another volume by Tscholke wh. she thinks she shall like as well as the one borrowed from Aunt Tufts wh. you may remember is out of print.

Mon. ev'g. The second day of the New Year has been

kinde than was the first, in that it has brought
the much longed for letter. Its abounding
cheer must suffice to keep our minds free
from foolish anxiety. Thank Addy with dear
love for her part of the picture. It is more
satisfying than the photograph of the
home on the hill - the inside being always
so much more than the outside of the house
our loved ones occupy. Her letter & yrs. make
my questioning above so useless that I wd.
burn it but that I am principled against
the waste of paper that I am continually
tempted to make whenever I attempt to
write. My anxiety to know how the book was
liked grew out of the remorse I felt from the
moment I bought it for burdening my traveling
friends with so much weight.

Yr questionings my dear Anne have in
part been answered in the letters you will
have recd before this reaches you. I have in
them felt obliged to say so many things that
were not cheering for you to read, other things
of a like character have been left unsaid.

Mrs Barnard has been very feeble almost all
the time since you went away. I do not know
what the Dr. thinks of her, but it seems to me
that if there is not a decided improvement
soon, she cannot long continue. Her bodily
weakness is affecting her memory as it never has
before & she is depressed & disheartened by it.

Fussie's cough is very obstinate & I am
troubled, not knowing what is best to be
done about it. Last week when Dr. Hale
came to see Father, I insisted that she
should see him once more & if his prescription
this time failed to help her she must
consult somebody else. He gave her a
new medicine & I think she has coughed
less. She went to Chelsea on Sat. Am - two
days after she saw him, & returned to
Night - & since her return (5 hours since)
she has scarcely coughed at all. She admits
that she might more often suppress the cough
than she does, & I have thought that she did
so when she wished to prove that any action
wh. I thought imprudent, had resulted in no
harm. She does not sleep well & gets nervous
she says - & that sets her off into a cough when
she tries to relieve her throat from its irritation.
She says she shall not get well till next
Summer & professes to be much annoyed by
the talk about the matter. Consequently I say
but little about it & should be glad if I did think
as little - seeing that my thinking is to do little
purpose. I shall however if she does not really
improve under the new medicine, take her to Dr. L.
unless she (P) expresses great unwillingness to go.

Uncle Moses was here to day & expressed the opinion I have for some time held that Geo. is in a confirmed consumption. The diarrhea that has pursued him for months can only be checked Dr H. says at the cost of his lungs - & the waste to life is more so hard to bear by the former way as by the racking cough. He looks forward to a recovery - at least talks of it, though so evidently wasting from week to week.

Of the home health I can make a better report than on any day for more than a week. Father's & Mother's colds are yielding to the Dr's prescriptions - or to time - At any rate they are decidedly better so to make me wish that Katy's visit had been promised ^{for} this week instead of last, when I could not receive her on account of the family invalidism. The weather of course has to take the blame for all the ailments - but why or wherefore I cannot divine. ^(that is a puzzle) It seems to me no people live under a better climate unless it be they who are domiciled on Mt. Washington. The telegrams that Prof. H. sends down every day are very interesting & make us feel that some of our Southern friends might like to change homes with him. I think his thermometer has not been below zero. I don't like the breeziness when the wind is going at the rate of 40 miles an hour!

Sun. evng. 8th The last week, father & mother being in such good health, has been to me a time of

gallivanting. One day I went to Charlestown to carry yr. thanks & my own Christmas remembrance to our good Aunt whom I found well & desirous to send love to her far-away niece. The next day I made the circuit of the Newtons - found just that, Mary S. Jr had been confined to the house for nearly a fortnight with cough & neuralgia but was on the mending hand - Mary Sr. was trying to throw off a cold by the help of acetic & Belladonna & thought she should succeed. Both sent much love also. John Katy's & Mrs White's I brought away the same story of affection, & from the Robbins who also came into that day's program. In all the houses, I found sufficient health & happiness to swell my own possessions in these commodities very sensibly. My last day of dissipation was on Fri. when the weather being less propitious to my plans, I had to be content with a long day at Leonard Livermore's with Leggie instead of adding to the visit there some half dozen calls elsewhere - but I had a good time nevertheless & hope for another tomorrow when Leggie is to return the visit. I fear there are not very interesting items to a resident of Rome, but you must remember my dear

that life to this Belmontese is not very rich
in adventure. I read the papers & am not
enlightened thereby. That of yesterday told us of
the Music Hall being crowded the night previous
as never before with Catholics full of zeal
for the cause of the persecuted Pope. A speaker
declared that "it was the greatest crowd ever collected
there & one of the greatest occasions possible that
had called them" - that "the whole work of Christianity
is done in Rome" &c, &c!! "It is not the Capital
of Italy but of the world as St Peter was not
the Cathedral of Rome but of the whole world.
So the Catholics of the whole world are bound to
protest against an iniquity that has no equal
in the annals of the world." Doesn't this look
formidable to the Kingdom of Victor Emmanuel?
Poor Frenchmen & poor Germans! I don't know
wh. I pity most in this cruel wicked war of
wh. we know so little through the conflicting ^{accusations}.

Last evng. we rec'd the news of our dear Mrs.
Twitthell's release from suffering. It is a little
more than a month I think ^{since} she wrote us a sweet
farewell evidently suffering much while making
the effort to write. A week or two afterward
she wrote again regretting that she had spoken
of her condition as she did, but excusing it upon
the plea that she had supposed the end was near.
Some mitigation of her pains by opiods enabled

think they may be taken much oftener, say once in 2 or 30 minutes. For the first symptoms of cold I prefer Nux & Mercurius - & for sore throat Mercurius - always the Nux & a Spoonful of water & taken once in 2 hours. My faith is so great that I have no fear that these and kindred things can harm the Stomach they enter - & sometimes I know that Colds for some reason or other mysteriously succumb when the Numbness & Spoon are standing round.

Mon. evng - ^{9th} Lizzie L. sits beside me reading most quietly a book that yesterday the rest of us read over. So much does sympathy help to appreciation. But "My Summer in a Garden" is pronounced by the critics to be very witty, & with Carrie to read & lead off in the laugh we did find it very funny. It is bed time & I must lead the way bedward before she gets hold of the very irresistible chapters. We went to Boston this P.M. to listen to an essay from Mr Hale upon "homes for the poor," at the Woman's Club - but a dying brother prevented his coming, & we remained only to hear Mrs May read a letter from Mrs J. T. Fields about a Coffee room she has established for the benefit of the poor who are too strongly tempted by the numerous dram shops. Mrs F. had been invited to talk to the Club on the subject, but excusing herself from attempting what she knew she should fumble in words she read the interesting letter that Miss May read. The project seems to be quite a success.

The Washington correspondent of the "Journal" says that Annie R.'s head of Lincoln is satisfactory but that it does not fit the body.

Lizzie sends love & says she wishes she did have seen you before you took such unexpected flight. The philosophy of Mr Warner is exciting to an exciting to an extent that interferes with my writing & I hasten to send a loving farewell with the assurance that we are all in excellent health & the hope that this may find you the enjoyment of the same blessing. Love to the family from the family -

her to write with more ease - & she seemed to find
her ~~oppressive~~ burden not too heavy to be borne.
Two letters from Mary since Christmas have
told us like stories of the alleviations ~~afforded~~,
of the devotion of friends & of her Mother's ability
to enjoy much that life was giving her. Still they
hoped for her speedy release, & feared protracted
suffering. She wrote that on the 4th she was down
stairs as usual - Looked over with the children
their Christmas books & had "a delicious rest" in the
afternoon. In the evening the Dr. surprised the family
by saying that there was a change & that the end
was near. In the 24 hours that followed there was
a quiet & painless sinking away - an unconscious one
I think. In the first letter that Mary wrote after
her Mother was unable to use her pen was the
particular request that her love (Mrs. T.) shd.
be sent to you. A warm loving heart had the
dear woman for her late found Cousin, & much
will one of them miss the sweet overflow. I spoke
of that particular request because I think it was
for that chiefly that M. wrote. Never excepting
in these farewell letters did she fail to express her
great interest in you & very often her desire to be
remembered in our letters to you.

Mother says I must write upon a separate paper
for Adely's use the Aconite & Belladonna prescription.
So I take this bit that may be torn off - but what to
write is the question. If I turn to the book, the infinitesimal
swallows up my faith & I will have nothing to do with it. But
my practice under Isaac's directions is to take when a
cold has really ~~gotten~~ possession of me a drop of A & drop
of B alternately every two hours - If there is fever I

Jan 27/77

Miss Anne Whitney
Care Messrs. Freeborn & Co
Rome
Italy.



